

CLAYTON PARKS AND RECREATION COMMISSION MEETING
Monday, January 4, 2010
The Center of Clayton - Multipurpose Room C

The following members were present:

Alex Berger	Jessie Hoagland
Ira Berkowitz	Dick Hyde
Mimi Deem	Robert Kerr
Judy Goodman	Eric Schneider
Rosemary Hardy	Mark Winings

Excused/Absent

Ira Berkowitz
Omri Praiss

Also present:

Patty DeForrest

Approval of the Minutes – The minutes were approved as written.

Addresses from the Audience – There were no addresses from the audience at this meeting.

Director's Report – Master Plan Update & Next Steps: Ms. DeForrest discussed the updated Parks and Recreation Master Plan project list. (Please refer to the Park and Recreation Master Plan project list for very detailed information about these projects.) She noted that some projects have been completed. The Oak Knoll path has been completed. The parks staff has to complete a bit of work around the edges of the path. Ball fields 1 and 2 are close to completion. It will be March before patrons will be able to see how great it looks. As far as other projects, staff is working on several small ones at the top of the list. This spreadsheet really helps keep the Parks and Recreation department on track with projects.

Ms. DeForrest noted that there are a lot of projects out there that needs to be discussed further. We need more interpretation for specific projects. It is important for us to figure out how we want to proceed with obtaining public input. Ms. DeForrest suggested that the next three meeting could be set-up to focus on the projects in each park, beginning with Shaw Park. This will help determine what the next steps will be with specific projects, such as the Ice Rink and Hanley House projects. Ms. Goodman and Ms. Deem stated that there is definitely a need for more public input. Ms. Deem said that the public input is very important and residents in the Clayton need us to listen to them; however it would be excessive for us to hire a consultant to re-do the entire Master Plan.

Many different ideas were discussed during the meeting about what would work best to gain public input. Mr. Kerr suggested publicizing three meetings, one per park, and the meetings could be divided among Commission members; therefore everyone would not have to attend each meeting. The meetings could be publicized in the City Views, through Neighborhood Associations and direct mail. The discussion would not be wide open during these meetings. The focus would be on what the pros and cons are with larger projects. This will help us get the input we need on higher visibility projects. Mr. Berger stated that we need to communicate the Master Plan to citizens. It is the Commissions responsibility is to communicate where we are and where we are going with Master Plan projects. It is vital to communicate in advance; especially with larger projects so residents are aware of what staff is going to be working on before the work begins. Ms. Hoagland also believes it is excellent to reach out to those in the community. She thought of twelve individuals right away who she could contact. These residents would be a great informal group to gain input from on various topics.

Mr. Berger stated that he thinks that communication has improved over the last three years. The Commission was going to go forward with developing a script for neighbors to talk about walking trails, playgrounds and the ice rink, but is going to hold off on it at this time. Instead of a script, the Commission will focus on park concepts and divide the meetings based on parks. There will be a review of very specific projects. Once the list of specifics is determined and narrowed down, then the Commission will find out what type of input they need from the public. Ms. DeForrest said that a concern of hers that has arisen within the community is: what is the best plan for Shaw Park. The questions are: if we put an amphitheater in, where should it go; what about the nature garden and

walking trail, plans by the CBD consultants and Ice Rink Task Force. Commission members agreed it was crucial to get the public's input in making these types of decisions.

Fund 70 Follow-up Information (Please see the attached detailed memo for additional information)

Ms. DeForrest reported that as of September 2009 the fund balance is \$866,000. The fund balance at the end of 2010 will be \$562,000 if all funds are spent that are being requested. In addition there are several emergency repair costs that are still undetermined including the wall at Shaw Park Aquatic Center and the motor for the compressor at the Ice Rink. A transfer of \$750,000 from the Parking Fund is being made this year and is planned for the next two years to shore up this fund. There are nine more years of payment to the debt service on this fund.

Project Update – Ms. DeForrest told the Commission that the Parks and Recreation Department received \$297,000 to fund the Inclusion Playground. This is about \$140,000 short of what we were hoping to receive when we applied for this grant. The options we have at this time are to scale back the project or ask the city and CCF to help fund the remainder of the project. Ms. DeForrest is meeting with the design firms to talk about scaling back the project. This would mean making the playground smaller by eliminating the sprayground or another section of the playground. Mr. Winnings said he is interested in seeing the consultants re-design before moving forward with asking the City and the CCF to assist with funding the remaining balance.

Policy Development – The City is working on developing a policy about re-naming facilities because a policy is not currently in place. The Commission discussed re-naming Shaw Park Pool in honor of Mr. Wally Lundt. Mr. Kerr said that Mr. Lundt is a legend and it would be great to honor him in some way, but was not sure it was appropriate to re-name the pool. It is a huge thing to re-name any building. Ms. DeForrest then stated that Mr. Lundt has been recognized in other ways. In 2006, the city hosted a party for him, there is a plaque at each pool and every year Mr. Lundt chooses a lifeguard to receive the Wally Lundt Aquatic Award. The BOA would have to approve the re-naming of the pool. Ms. DeForrest will contact Mr. Beard to let him know that Mr. Lundt has been and is still being recognized by the City for everything he has done and accomplished over the years.

Old Business / New Business – Dog Park Discussion: Ms. Hardy began the discussion by saying that she is not opposed a Dog Park, but she does not want existing park land to be used for a Dog Park. Mr. Kerr agreed with Ms. Hardy's comments. He thinks a Dog Park is a great concept. The issue is where can a Dog Park be developed in Clayton. Ms. Deem stated that she is not opposed either, but firmly believes one cannot be established because it would not be a quality Dog Park, due to the lack of land in Clayton. Further, she spoke with her neighbors and they also said they would not want to see a Dog Park just thrown together that would be poor quality. If it cannot be done well then we should not do it at this time, especially because property in Clayton is just not available. Ms. DeForrest worked with Ms. Proebsting, the Director of Parks and Recreation at the City of Richmond Heights, during the Highway 40 construction to come up with a parcel of land that could be used for a Dog Park. Unfortunately, after the construction project was completed appropriate land was not available. The City could initiate support to have a partnership with another community such as Brentwood or University City; therefore Clayton residents could potentially receive a discount to use their Dog Park. Ms. Hardy reminded the Commission that when the Dog Park Committee members presented at the November Commission meeting they stated that a partnership with another city did not interest them; the committee definitely wants the Dog Park to be in Clayton. The Commission also came to a consensus that a quality Dog Park must be a minimum of one acre of land. Ms. Goodman said a bit less than an acre would work; ¾ of an acre would be sufficient as long as it was quality. Ms. Goodman also stated that the only other option is to contact business owners who have privately owned wide open spaces. There is an area along Forsyth that has not been developed yet that may be a potential place to have a temporary Dog Park. Ms. Dubin from the Dog Park Committee is also keeping her eyes out for property. Ms. DeForrest will give the Dog Park Committee an update stating that the consensus of the Commission is they generally support the concept of a Dog Park and will keep their eyes open for land.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Denise Ucinski